(b) if so, the details thereof with reasons for such landslide;

(c) whether incidents of landslide are becoming regular feature in hilly areas;

(d) if so, the details thereof State-wise during 1992 and 1993 upto July;

(e) whether Government propose to take some measures to check such incidents in future to avert human casualties and damage to properties; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and if not the resons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) to (f) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Reduction in excise duty on butter

4406. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI:
SHRI B. K. HARI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have reduced the excise duty on table butter;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the impact on retail price of the butter;

(d) whether the price of Amul butter is more than Vijaya and Aarey butter; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) and (b) Butter has been fully exempted from payment of excise duty with effect from 25-7-1991 *vide* Government Notification No. 16/91-CE, dated 25th July, 1991.

(c) The sale price of butter depends on the cost of production which in turn is determined by a number of factors like purchase price or milk and cost of other input which vary from place to place.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) The price of Amul butter is fixed in order to provide a remunerative price to the co-operative milk producers of Gujarat.

Foreign visits of Agricultural Minister

4407. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of foreign visits made by the Ministers of Agriculture during 1991-92 and 1992-93;

(b) the purpose of these visits; and

(c) the number of staff members who accompanied them during these visits and expenditure incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Cultivation of seedless grapes

4408. SHRI BISHAMBHAR NATH PANDE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that high yielding seedless grapes popular among grape-growers of Maharashtra is now grown in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have conducted the soil test to explore the other areas suitable for the cultivation of seedless grapes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Two varieties from Maharashtra namely Sonoka Tasa-Ganesh and Sharad seedless are performing well in Coimbatore conditions and likely to be expanded in other area of Tamil Nadu. Besides this Thompson seedless variety grown in Maharashtra and other parts of the country is also being grown in Tamil Nadu.

(c) No systematic soil testing have been undertaken to assess the areawise suitability for the grape cultivation in Tamil Nadu.

Production of Tobacco

4409. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are making any efforts and allocating resources for the productivity of tobacco per acre in Andhra Pradesh and other tobacco growing States;

(b) whether it is a fact that tobacco productivity per acre in India is only about 1040 Kgs. per hectare;

(c) if so, what are the reasons for this low yield per hectare; and

(d) whether Research and Development effort is proposed to increase the yield of tobacco per acre?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. The average productivity of tobacco in India during 1989-90 to 1991-92 was 1358 kg. per hectare. The Asian and World average during corresponding period was 1457 and 1508 kg. per hectare, respectively. The marginal lower yield in India than World average was due to more area under rainfed conditions, lesser use of inputs etc.

(d) The Institutes of Indian Council of Agricultural Research as well as State Agricultural Universities of major tobacco growing states are already engaged in tobacco research, while the developmental scheme for virginia tobacco is being implemented in virginia growing states by the Tobacco Board in the Ministry of Commerce.

Reclamation of Alkali Soil

4410. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the area of land reclaimed so far in each of the States of Haryana, Punjab and U.P. under the scheme of Reclamation of Alkali (USAR) Soil; and

(b) the total cost of reclamation per hectare of land which has been incurred in each of those States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) and (b) A Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Reclamation of Alkali (USAR) Soils is under implementation in the States of Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh since the Seventh Five Year Plan. Area reclaimed and per hectare cost of reclamation in each of these States are as under:—

S. No.	States	Area Reclaimed (VII Plan to 92-93) (Ha.)	Per ha. Cost of reclamation (Rs.)
1.	Haryana	85,014	2439
2.	Punjab	1,61,208	2108
3.	Uttar Pradesh	45,935	4369

Voluntary retirement in PSUS

4411. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the Public Sector Undertakings under his Ministry in which voluntary retirement schemes are under implementation at present; and

(b) the names of employees in each of those Undertakings who have taken voluntary retirement under these schemes till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) At present a Voluntary Retirement Scheme is under implementation in the National Seeds Corporation Ltd., New Delhi, a Public Sector Undertaking under the administrative control of Department of Agriculture and Cooperation.

(b) The names of employees who have taken voluntary retirement are enclosed as per Statement I and Statement II.